

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF INDIANA
INDIANAPOLIS DIVISION

PENDLETON HEIGHTS GAY-STRAIGHT)
ALLIANCE, an unincorporated association,)

Plaintiff,)

v.)

No. 1:21-cv-02480-JRS-TAB

SOUTH MADISON COMMUNITY)
SCHOOL CORPORATION, *et al.*,)

Defendants.)

Declaration of Reece Axel-Adams

Reece Axel-Adams, being duly sworn, says that:

1. I am 18 years old.
2. I attend Pendleton Heights High School, a public school located in Pendleton, Indiana.
3. The school contains approximately 1400 students in grades 9-12.
4. I am currently a senior and I have been in the school since I was a freshman.
5. I am familiar with the various clubs that are present in the school.
6. I am also familiar with the courses offered at the school.
7. The Pendleton Heights High School Student Handbook lists some, but not all the clubs or organizations, which are available to the students. I have attached the relevant excerpt of the Handbook to this declaration.

8. Some of the groups listed, like the foreign language clubs, relate directly to the foreign languages taught at the school.

9. However, some of the groups listed are not directly related to any courses at the school and do not, to the best of my knowledge lead to academic credit for those participating. These include Best Buddies, Mat Maids, Outdoor Adventure Club, and SADD ("Students Against Destructive Decisions"). These groups meet at the school during non-instructional times.

10. The student groups listed in the Handbook are able to publicize themselves and advertise their existence because they are listed in the Handbook.

11. I also believe that the groups listed in the Handbook may post information about their meetings on bulletin boards at the school. They may also be mentioned on the campus radio station that plays daily announcement through the school. In fact, on October 1, 2021, I heard an announcement for Outdoor Adventure Club during daily announcements.

12. There are also other groups that are not currently listed in the Handbook that are allowed to meet at the school during noninstructional time. These include Fellowship of Christian Athletes, E-gaming (for electronic game enthusiasts), Robotics (for those who are interested in building robots) and Bring Change to Mind (a group that focuses on encouraging dialogue about mental health).

13. Although the groups listed immediately above are not listed in the Handbook, I am aware that at least Fellowship of Christian Athletes, Bring Change to Mind, and E-gaming has been allowed to post information about its meetings on school bulletin boards and be part of the announcements that are broadcast through the school radio station as part of daily announcements.

14. I am aware that in the past there was a Gay-Straight Alliance (GSA) at the high school, although as of the beginning of this school year it had not met for a while.

15. A GSA is designed to allow gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, and allied students to meet in order to provide social, emotional, and educational support to each other.

16. This year I spoke to the Principal of Pendleton Heights High School and received permission to restart the Pendleton Height GSA ("PHGSA").

17. The purpose of the PHGSA is to provide social, emotional, and educational support to gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, and allied students at Pendleton Heights High School. It also serves to inform the school community as a whole of the existence of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender students and is designed to foster tolerance and acceptance of all students regardless of their sexual orientation.

18. PHGSA has a faculty sponsor and has met in her classroom after instructional time. This has caused no disruption to the school or to the educational environment.

19. Although the Principal has allowed PHGSA to meet, she has indicated that the group is not an "official" club. As such, the group will not be listed in the Handbook and

cannot post information about itself and its meetings in the school. Nor can it advertise and publicize itself on the school's radio station.

20. The Principal has indicated that all these opportunities are being denied to PHGSA because the school needs to remain "neutral" on gay, lesbian, transgender, and related issues.

21. Given that PHGSA has only recently resumed operations, it needs to be able to advertise and get the word out to grow its membership.

22. PHGSA fulfills a vitally important role in providing a place of care and community for a group of students who often lack such support and to provide them with important information at a crucial period of their development.

23. The inability of PHGSA to advertise and expose students to its existence and beneficial purposes is causing it to have fewer members than it would have if it was given the same ability as other clubs to advertise and publicize its existence.

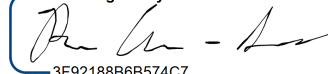
24. This inability severely hinders and impedes the basic purpose of PHGSA, to be a place of shelter, support, and education, not just for gay, lesbian, transgender, and non-binary students, but for all students at the high school.

Verification

I verify under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.

Executed on: 10/6/2021 | 10:47 AM EDT

DocuSigned by:



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Reece Axel-Adams

Prepared by:

Kenneth J. Falk
ACLU of Indiana
1031 E. Washington St.
Indianapolis, IN 46202

PENDLETON HEIGHTS HIGH SCHOOL



STUDENT HANDBOOK 2020-2021

the Certifying Scientist feels the quantitative levels determined to be above the established cutoffs do not reflect current use but natural decay, then a negative result may be reported.

10. The Certifying Scientist will complete the final review on the drug testing custody and control form and return the appropriate copy to the Building Principal in a confidential manner.

PICK-UP PROCESS

The selected laboratory is responsible for seeing that specimens are delivered to or picked up by the testing laboratory and the Chain of Custody form properly annotated.

SECTION 8: EXTRACURRICULAR/ATHLETIC INFORMATION

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Permission for extracurricular events, meetings, and parties must be obtained and scheduled through the principal to help avoid conflicts. All extracurricular activities are to appear on the weekly calendar.

EXTRACURRICULAR/ATHLETIC PARTICIPATION

In order for a student to participate in any extracurricular activity or athletic contest he/she must be in attendance at least one-half day on the date of the event or contest. One half day of attendance is defined as three hours or more.

If the student is on a school sponsored field trip he/she is considered in attendance at school. Likewise a death in the immediate family as defined in the attendance policy would not be a violation of this requirement.

STUDENT DANCES

Dances are held by various organizations during the school year. All dances are to be cleared through the principal's office and arrangements made well in advance. After-game dances may be held on Friday and Saturday nights only and will dismiss at 11:00 P.M. The time for other dances should be scheduled between the hours of 7:00 P.M. and 11:00 P.M. Before scheduling a dance, each organization must agree to abide by and enforce the following rules:

1. Dances are for students who are currently enrolled in PHHS. Some dances may require a guest to be properly registered.
2. Students will be responsible for the actions of their guests.
3. Grade school and junior high school students will not be admitted to high school dances except when in the company of their parents who may be acting as sponsors.
4. All students attending will follow the school dress code with the exception of special dances.
5. Any student or guest leaving will leave school grounds and not return during the hours of the dance.
6. Sponsors must provide chaperones and auxiliary police in numbers sufficient to control estimated crowds at dances.
7. Slam dancing is not permitted.

ELECTION OF REPRESENTATIVES AND OFFICERS

Class Officers

A student may run for class office by obtaining an application form or petition from the Attendance Office. The petition must be signed by fifteen classmates. The candidate will be notified if he/she does not meet the qualifications.

Qualifications for Class Officers

1. A candidate must have a scholastic average (GPA) of at least C (5.0).
2. The candidate must be enrolled and a full-time student at the time of the election.
3. The election will be held by ballot and the candidate receiving a plurality will be declared the winner.
4. The candidate shall be required to give a speech to the class. This speech shall not be longer than one minute.
5. Three campaign posters per candidate will be permitted. Posters must be on poster board, with only one name appearing on each poster, and approved by the Student Council sponsor.

6. The candidate shall obtain three teacher references including at least one of the class sponsors. If the two teacher references rate the candidate below average, or if the class sponsor rates the candidate below average, the candidate may not run for office.
7. The student must be a full-time student during the entire year of his/her office or shall forfeit the office. The sponsor and steering committee shall have the power to replace the officer in a manner appropriate to the situation.

Steering Committees

The four class officers are selected in the spring for the following school year. These same officers also assume duties on the Steering Committee. Three additional students are to be appointed jointly by the class sponsors and newly elected president soon after the elections are held. The appointment of three at-large members shall be made by the sponsors who have had the class for the previous school year. Ten (10) students per class will serve as the Class Officer/Steering Committee.

Student Council

1. Each candidate must have had a scholastic average of at least 5.0 during the preceding year.
2. The student must be a full-time student during the entire year of his/her office or shall forfeit the office. The Student Council sponsor shall have the power to replace the member in an appropriate manner.
3. The election will be held by ballot. The two candidates receiving the most votes will serve a two-year term.
4. Each class will have one elected member for every fifty class members.
5. Three campaign posters per candidate will be permitted. Posters must be on poster board with only one name appearing on each poster and approved by the Student Council sponsor.
6. The Vice-President of each class will serve as a member and act as a liaison between the student council and his/her class steering committee.
7. The officers of Student Council for the following year will be elected in the spring by the current membership before class elections are conducted. The officers will be President, Vice-President, Recording Secretary, Corresponding Secretary, and Treasurer.

CLUBS AND ORGANIZATIONS

Academic Club

Academic Club members participate in the Hoosier Heritage Conference academic competitions. These competitions include the Hoosier Spell Bowl and the Academic Super Bowl. Club members work in teams to study and prepare for conference and regional competition. Teams that qualify participate in state competition.

Art Club

Art Club is open to any student who has completed one year of high school art. The aim of the club is to provide art students with the opportunity to widen their knowledge and interest in the field. The club takes trips to museums, college art departments, special exhibits, and other art related activities.

Best Buddies

Best Buddies is the world's largest organization dedicated to ending the social, physical and economic isolation of the 200 million people with intellectual and developmental disabilities around the world. Best Buddies membership is open to all students.

Delta Epsilon Phi (German National Honor Society)

The purpose is to recognize high achievement in German language studies. To qualify for membership at Pendleton Heights High School students must have completed at least three semesters of German, be a junior or senior, and have a German grade point average of 10.0(A-) throughout their study of German.

Deutscher Verein

German Club's aims are to provide students, school, and community with opportunities to become acquainted with the German language and culture. Membership is open to anyone who has taken German or is currently taking German.

FCCLA (Family, Career, and Community Leaders of America)

Membership is open to any student who has taken or who is currently taking Family and Consumer Science courses. This national vocational organization empowers young men and women to become leaders by addressing personal, family, work, and societal issues through family and consumer science education.

FFA - (National FFA Organization)

Membership is limited to those students regularly enrolled in vocational agriculture and who have a satisfactory program of supervised farm practice. The purpose of the organization is to prepare students for premier leadership, personal growth, and career success through agricultural education.

Book Club

Book Club is a student book discussion group. Students select book titles to read and then meet for a group discussion and snacks. Book titles selected in the past include The DaVinci Code, Beginner's Luck, The Five People You Will Meet in Heaven, and It's Not about the Bike.

La Societe Honoraire de Francais

La Societe Honoraire de Francais is a National French Honor Society. Its purpose is to recognize those individuals in French classes that have achieved and maintained high achievement in their class work. To be eligible for membership, one must complete at least three semesters of French and maintain an A- GPA in French studies. It is also highly recommended that these students maintain a B- overall GPA.

Le Cercle Francais

The aims of the French Club are to provide students, school, and community with the opportunities to become acquainted with the French language and culture. Membership is open to anyone who has taken at least one year of French or who is currently taking French.

Los Amigos Espanoles

The aims of the Spanish Club are to provide students, school, and community with the opportunities to become acquainted with the Spanish language and culture. Membership is open to anyone who has taken at least one year of Spanish or who is currently taking Spanish.

Mat Maids

The basic function of Mat Maids is to support wrestling by attending the meets and serving as host/hostesses at all tournaments. Support is also given to the wrestling team through money-making projects. Many social gatherings are held to provide opportunity for Mat Maids, wrestlers, parents, and friends to come together for fun.

Muse

The *Muse* is the PHHS literary magazine. Published twice annually, the *Muse* features student art and writing, which have been selected for publication by a student committee.

National Beta Club

The National Beta Club is a service-leadership club open to all sophomore, junior, and senior high school students who maintain a high level of scholarship). Effective school year 2018-19, all candidates must attain and maintain a 9.0 minimum GPA for membership consideration. Beta Club members inducted prior to 2018-19 must maintain an 8.0 minimum GPA. The purpose of this organization is to provide opportunities and experiences enabling students to demonstrate the ideals of character, achievement, service, and leadership. All students who meet the academic requirement and who are of good character will be invited to become members. The student accepts membership by the payment of the national and local membership dues.

National Honor Society

The National Honor Society is an organization for juniors and seniors who are selected for membership based on their qualities of scholarship, leadership, service, and character as required by the national constitution. Individuals must have, and must maintain a minimum 10.5 cumulative GPA. Seniors in the Class of 2019 will be considered on the 10-point minimum scale. Effective with the Class of 2020, all candidates must attain and maintain a 10.5 minimum GPA for membership consideration. Members are selected by a faculty council consisting of five faculty members who are

selected by the high school principal. Selection is determined by the faculty council based on academic achievement as shown by the GPA, the candidate's individual narrative, and input submitted by faculty and staff.

Outdoor Adventure Club

The purpose of Outdoor Adventure Club is to provide students with opportunities for outdoor activities and to promote physical fitness. Group outings include activities such as camping, horseback riding, canoeing, rock climbing, hiking, spelunking, and skiing.

Sociedad Honoraria Hispanica

Sociedad Honoraria Hispanica (SHH) is a National Spanish Honor Society. Its purpose is to recognize high achievement in Spanish and to promote a continuity of interest in Hispanic studies. To qualify for membership in the Captual Quijano at Pendleton Heights High School, students must have completed at least three semesters of Spanish and must maintain a 10.0 (A-) GPA throughout their study of Spanish.

Student Council

Student Council is a student government organization. A major responsibility of this organization is planning, organizing, and supervising Homecoming activities. Student Council members are elected each spring for the following school year. Each candidate must have a scholastic average of at least 5.0 during the preceding school year. Election is by all-school ballot, and the two candidates receiving the most votes will serve a two-year term. Each class will have one elected member for every fifty class members.

SADD

Students Against Destructive Decisions is a student organization that promotes making good choices and a healthy lifestyle. Students participate in various activities including peer to peer events, trips to the elementary schools to promote healthy choices and various events in the community and around the state.

WEEM Radio

PHHS is proud to be the only Madison County high school to offer broadcast training classes and its own FM radio station, 91.7. Students enroll in radio classes and must earn a radio broadcasting license by passing the FCC exam. Students have the opportunity to be "on the air" in a variety of broadcasting roles.

FRATERNITIES, SORORITIES, AND SECRET ORGANIZATIONS

A secret organization cannot be given recognition in any manner. Students are to refrain from manifesting membership or activity in such organizations. Pendleton Heights High School will sponsor and recognize only those clubs and organizations which are conducive to the proper growth and development of boys and girls. Membership in unrecognized, unapproved or unlawful organizations will prevent that student from participating in any activity as a representative of our school and may lead to the suspension or expulsion of the student.

All clubs and organizations must have a copy of their constitution on file in the principal's office. Membership cannot be subject to race, religion, national origin, or sex.

ATHLETIC COUNCIL

The Athletic Council which is composed of the Superintendent, a local school board representative, the high school principal, the high school athletic director, high school assistant athletic director, the middle school athletic director, and three (3) at-large varsity coaches will formulate and recommend policies for conducting the total athletic program to the Board of School Trustees. This Council also charges the building principals and the athletic directors with the responsibility of carrying out the policies adopted by the board and the rules and regulations of the IHSA.

ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT CONDUCT CODE

Students participating in the athletic program, at any level, are required to abide by the rules and regulations established for all students. In addition, student athletes will be provided with a written copy of their respective coach's rules and